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*The Agitation of Thought is the Beginning of Truth.*

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S. R. KIRBY, M.D., EDITOR.

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## ALLOPATHY vs. HOMŒOPATHY.

THERE are points in the following controversy which should interest the profession, and therefore, we lay it entire before our readers. We assume, that Dr. Hendershott has a fair standing among his colleagues in the profession at Springfield, Ohio, or he would not have been elected President of the "Springfield Medical Society;" and further, his valedictory, being thought worthy of publication by his associates, gives it an influence upon the public, and hence our reply. The question may arise, how we got into the controversy? Some one sent us a copy of Dr. H.'s address with the request, "please reply."

### Medical Lectures.\*

SPRINGFIELD, May 8, 1854.

DR. HENDERSHOTT:

Dear Sir—At the last meeting of the Springfield Medical Society, you favored us with a speech, on the occasion of your resigning your duty as President. There were many facts contained in that speech, which were not only interesting to those medical men who were present, but which will also be read with interest by an intelligent public. It is therefore that we, the undersigned, as members of that Society, hereby request you to publish the same. Many of the medical societies in the United States frequently publish their proceedings, and we hope that our Society will, in future, follow their example.

Truly yours,

G. C. PAOLI,  
ISAAC KAY,  
G. P. HACHENBERG,  
A. C. McLAUGHLIN,  
A. BRUCE,  
HENRY H. SEYS,  
E. M. BUCKINGHAM.

May 9th, 1854.

Gentlemen—Your polite note of yesterday has been received. The address you

refer to was prepared under circumstances of deep domestic affliction, and, certainly, with no view to its publication. Entertaining, as I do, however, a high appreciation of your kindness and civility, I have consented to furnish you, imperfect as it is, a copy for the press.

I am, very respectfully, yours,  
I. HENDERSHOTT.

DRS. PAOLI,  
RAY,  
HACHENBERG,  
McLAUGHLIN,  
BRUCE,  
SEYS, and  
BUCKINGHAM.

### On the Genius of the Profession.

THE profession of medicine is as old, at least, as the days of Hippocrates. According to historical evidence, he was the first man who laid down precepts concerning this branch of study, and attempted to reduce it to the regularity of a system. It is true that the art of healing may be traced back to a period long anterior to the Hippocratic age, for, according to Homer, who flourished 1000 years before the Christian era, Poladarius was employed, in the Trojan war, in the study of diseases and their cures. But it was reserved for the sage of Cos, who has ever been styled the Prince of Physicians, to lay the first foundation of medical science, on which posterity has been building for at least four and twenty centuries.

But if we were to undertake to trace the history of medicine from the earliest records to the present time, we should find that it is little less than a history of doctrines, or principles, and of men who have rendered themselves illustrious by their discovery. As a history of doctrines, it lays open the origin of opinion, the changes which they have undergone, the distinct characters of different systems, and the leading points in which they agree to differ. It may, therefore, in fact, be regarded as a history of the human understanding. As a history of men, it relates to the principal incidents in the lives of the more eminent of them; par-

ticularly those circumstances connected with their birth, education, character, and situation in life, which may be supposed to have influenced their opinions—takes notice, also, of their followers and their opponents, and describes the origin, progress, and decline of their respective sects. Thus we perceive that the history of medicine has been a sort of register of discoveries in the world of science, and as a skillful guide toward unknown and unexplored regions, where future adventurers may with safety and advantage direct their course. It also serves to acquaint us with the general sources of science, with the names of distinguished authors, the subjects of their works, and the assistance that may be expected from them in medical researches. So that the history of our profession may be justly deemed an important branch of the history of erudition.

It is but just to admit that through every stage of human improvement, from the remotest antiquity down to the present era, the medical profession has always been equal to every other, in its grand and noble achievements. During the periods when Locke, and Boyle, and Bacon, and Newton flourished, medicine had its cotemporaries, who were not inferior in large and liberal mental endowments. While these philosophers, with kindred minds, were giving to the world new theories on the intellectual powers and constitution of man—on the laws that govern the physical system—such as the revolution of the heavenly bodies, gravitation, the polarity of the magnetic needle, and many other ingenious discoveries in the departments of science—there was a class of men operating in another field of mental labor, whose minds were as acute and keenly discerning—whose judgments were as sound and comprehensive—whose ratiocination was as strong and convincing—whose philanthropy took a bolder and more gigantic sweep—and whose aim and object was to alleviate the ills of suffering humanity, and to soften and temper the rigor of those laws that had doomed it to decadence and death. Among all the boasted trophies of science and philosophy, where shall we find one that reflects a brighter lustre on the name that achieved it than that which is accorded to William Harvey for his discovery of the circulation of the blood, and the motion of the heart in animals. To whom has there been due, at any time in the progress of human discovery, a more enduring fame—a loftier niche in the temple of science—than was merited by Crawford, by Black, and by Bergman, who were separately engaged in founding their doctrine of *latent heat*, supposed to be retained in chemical combination by the particles of fluids.

We have, therefore, the satisfaction of knowing that the profession of medicine has kept an even pace with the other sci-

ences in the progressive spirit of the age; that it is not only now in a state of advancement, but even advancing with increasing rapidity; and the present indications seem to promise that, as it becomes more and more elevated by the agencies now called into requisition, new facts will be continually discovered, and those which are already known will be better understood and more beneficially applied.

To the formation of a national medical association, and of similar associations in the several States, we may confidently look for an augmentation of all that gives utility to the profession, and dignity to its pursuit. Such combinations of talent and experience, radiating as they do from a common centre, sending out rays of light and intelligence to so large and numerous a constituency, has long been desiderated by the profession. The primary objects of these organizations will be to elevate the standard, and to give a higher tone to the character of the profession, by securing to its members better educational advantages, and of looking well to the natural genius and capability of the student as a *sine qua non* to his entering upon a course of study.

The acquirements which are necessary to form the accomplished physician, are, indeed, not comprised within a small compass, and are, therefore, only to be obtained by a careful and thorough cultivation of the understanding for a series of years; for, without these preparatory and collateral advantages, the mere acquaintance of knowledge, derived from a course of reading, will, in general, lead but to a blind routine in the steps of some favorite teacher, and to a limited, and often erroneous application of a few monotonous rules and precepts. It seems obvious, then, that a complicated art, like that of medicine, can only be acquired by the union of extensive information with diligent research and observation, and that much evil is likely to ensue where it is practiced without these qualifications.

Absurd as is the notion of universal remedies, or of any given remedy for any one disease, nominally the same, the extent of quackery seems, however, to be increasing, partly, we are sorry to say, from the authority of law, but very much, also, from the acknowledged imperfection of the medical art, in the hands of so many nostrum mongers, and half qualified practitioners. It is true, indeed, that genius and sense are the peculiar gift of heaven, and cannot be acquired by the most extensive learning, or the greatest effort of industry; but with these as auxiliary aids, genius and sense are susceptible of the highest state of improvement.

In alluding to the late reformatory measures that have been proposed by our national and State medical authorities, we think that of requiring all students, previous to

their entering upon a course of study, to possess themselves of a knowledge of the French and German languages, is a prerequisite entitled to very high consideration. In nearly all the public schools of Europe and Great Britain, an acquaintance with these languages is deemed essential in a candidate for medical honors. We know that much of our medical literature is derived from France and Germany. These nations have ever been foremost in the exhibition of new and important discoveries in philosophy, in science, and the arts. They have given to the world of letters more names of imperishable lustre, than, perhaps, any other nations on the globe; and to read their works to advantage, they should be read in the pure vernacular, without any foreign admixture arising from corrupt translations. It will be remembered, that in the early history of medicine in this country, owing to the low state of our literature, and the want of facilities for acquiring a more thorough medical education, embracing a knowledge of the classics, that such antecedents were dispensed with—they were deemed too onerous and expensive. But now it is otherwise. We have become a powerful nation, and can enter into successful competition with the proudest nations of the earth. Our moneyed resources are boundless. We have a territorial expansion that covers nearly one-quarter of the globe. We have a commerce that exacts its contributions from every sea and from every island, where the elements of human comfort can be found. We have a larger capital invested in mental culture, in moral renovation, and in all that elevates, ennobles, and dignifies humanity, than any other civilized portion of the globe. In view of these facts, we do think, with all deference to the opinions of others, that what we have here recommended as a new touch-stone of merit in the medical profession, should be demanded in future, so as to quadruple it with the other learned professions.

But, gentlemen, in a paper like the one I am now reading, in which I am compelled to be more discursive than methodical, I cannot forbear to do justice to the character and claims of the American Medical profession, and the eminent rank it has attained, by the power and influence of a few master minds, many of whom have run their career of honor and distinction, while others are still toiling in the pursuit of similar achievements.

It was as early as the period of our Revolutionary struggle, that a great light arose in the medical horizon of this country, which sent its radiating beams not only across the ocean, but far into these Western wilds, where the fires upon the altars of our profession were just beginning to kindle. It was a broad beacon light, that presaged the coming of a brighter era. The

most substantial glory of a country is in its virtuous great men. Rush was both a philosopher and a patriot. By the union of great talents, and of solid acquirements in nearly all the sciences, and by a professional knowledge of the human frame—with a mind unobscured by selfish tendencies, he was enabled to bring into one extensive system the progress of the mind, from its first rudiments of sensation, through the maze of complex ideas and affections, to show how man rises from sensation to intellect. Thoroughly grounded in classical and elegant literature, with a logical and severely analytical mind, he scorned all factitious aids, and bent its powers to a critical analysis of nature, as the only means of curing disease or effectively imparting knowledge. His work struck an everlasting root, that will bear perennial blossoms on his grave. He was the Sydenham of America.

As an author, John Eberle deservedly ranks among the first writers of the 19th century. If there was any thing wanting in this country to consummate his fame, and secure his immortality, it was made up by the enlightened nations of Europe, into whose several languages his works were translated. In clearness and perspicuity of style—in manliness and vigor of thought—in felicity of arrangement—in vastness of comprehension—in doctrinal and preceptive exactness—and in minuteness and niceness of observation—he was a model writer. We all remember what the verdict of the profession was, when his works issued from the press; and in despite of all succeeding labors and efforts by our countrymen, that verdict will go down to posterity. He was less animated by a desire of glory, than any other man of the age; his object being solely to advance the interests of the profession, and to benefit his race.

Daniel Drake, though a western man, has done much to beautify the American temple of science, and to give it its æsthetic proportions. He was thrown into life in the midst of obscurity, but he had a genius that luxuriated like the rich growth of herbage that spread over the virgin soil that gave him birth. The budding time of that genius was so short and rapid, that it was almost coetaneous with the bloom that followed. It was not long before this hopeful scion, so full of intellectual vitality, was removed to our own shores, but its transplantation so far from stinting its growth, imparted to it new elements of life, and a more expansive energy. The particular features of a life and character capable, under circumstances so unpropitious in the outset, of attaining so great distinction, are objects of curiosity and interest. Those who knew him best, and were in habits of intimacy with him, will long speak of his eloquence, his transcendent

literary and scientific attainments, and his great capacity for intellectual labor—of the inextinguishable zeal, and absorbing ardor of his exertions, whether directed to political, literary, or professional objects—of the entireness with which he drew his whole soul into every cause in which he engaged—of the intrepidity of his spirit—and of his indignant sense of private wrongs or personal injury. When Drake died, the profession seemed to have lost its torch in the West. As a writer, his last great work though not completed, is sufficient to embalm his name to future generations. Of its merits, I forbear further to speak, than simply to repeat the commendations of the English and American press. We have only adverted, gentlemen, to those three great luminaries of the profession in America, to elicit your congratulations on a theme of so much pride and pleasure. If these lights have shown so brilliantly from the summit of Olympus, we trust there are many others who will reach the same destination, and support at least an honorable rivalry with the nations of the Old World.

You are all aware—especially such of you as have been in the walks of medicine for a series of years—of the many disturbing agencies and painful conflicts that beset the pathway of the medical practitioner. Of these, there are none, perhaps, which are so annoying and vexatious as that of *empiricism*. It has assumed in this country, so many protean forms, and such a variety of aspects, that it would be difficult, even by authority of law, to arrest its progress. In no period in the history of medicine has it been free from a host of miserable gnostics and usurpers, who would override and demolish all that is beautiful, and fair, and valuable, in the profession. Ingenious and designing men have always had the adroitness to bring forward their pretended discoveries in such an imposing light, as to challenge, at once, the credulity of the ignorant and unsuspecting masses.

There are two species of empiricism now rife in this country, which, in our humble judgment, are most disastrous and dangerous to the public health. We allude to Hydropathy and Homœopathy. When Priessnitz first established his headquarters at Graeffenberg, he may have been honest in advertising the world of the wonderful success of his modes and plans of treating diseases. Some striking cures were doubtless occasionally made; not by any means, however, in that proportion to the whole number treated which the exaggerated statements of its friends would lead the public to believe. The time occupied in effecting cures by the hydropathic system is always tedious and protracted, leading to a well-founded belief, that if the same strict regimen there enforced in diet, exercise, pure air, and temperance, had

been observed at home, the patient would have been spared the drenching and sweating, both of his skin and purse. But the prestige of novelty, together with a thousand other attractions, have been thrown round this new system of remedial treatment. Large and extensive establishments have been erected and fitted up similar to our fashionable watering places, and they have been resorted to almost as much for purposes of recreation and amusement, as for any other. It is there you will find delightful pleasure grounds, graceful and charming promenades, romantic and picturesque scenery, smiling landscapes, exquisite displays of flowers and foliage, tumbling cascades, with naiades and water-gods sporting through the limpid fountains. This is Hydropathy, and in all this gorgeous paraphernalia there is concealed the secret of its wonderful potency in the cure of diseases. It is true, one might submit to the torture of the swathing-bands, to a procrustean bedstead, to all the gelid processes, which the grave and Socratic dean of the establishment might order, for the sake of having one's name enrolled among so enviable a class of valetudinarians. But Hydropathy, like every other innovation of modern times, will have its day. Its numerous failures in the cure of diseases, and occasional fatal results induced by its application to cases ill adapted to receive so severe a process, are already making inroads upon its popularity; and unless more caution, and more science are used in its application, it will soon be found like many of its antecedents, in a progress of oblivion.

But what shall we say of Homœopathy? This is a system of medicine which is built upon a paradox, assuming that its whole strength lies in its weakness! It is a system throughout of infinitesimals; and the mind that first conceived it, and those who have adopted and defended it, belong mentally to that class of molecular dimensions. They are so infinitely small in *therapeutics*, that there is but one step between them and nonentity. It is humiliating to an honest and candid mind to dwell upon the fallacies of this modern imposture.

The force of Hahnemann's doctrine, and his capacity for correct and philosophical investigation, will be sufficiently evinced by considering what he says of some of his medicinal agents. Take common salt for example, we take this article for illustration because it is one whose properties are familiar to all. He says a grain of salt is divided to a millionth degree of attenuation. This powder is dissolved in diluted alcohol, and the division extended to the decillionth degree. Carried to this degree of dilution, sea salt, he says, is a powerful and heroic medicament, which can only be administered to patients with the utmost caution. Now, all this may be very well, but we should like to know where the wa-



ter or alcohol could be had, to begin with, that does not contain a hundred times more salt than is here prescribed; and what adds greatly to our difficulty is, that this remedy, so potent, and requiring to be used with such extreme caution, is given to patients, who are taking millions of times more of it with every meal, whose accretions, whose gastric juices, and every particle of whose blood, contains, at all times, and as an indispensable constituent, millions of times more salt than is here prescribed, with the expectation of its producing powerful medicinal effects. A grain of salt dropped into the Ohio river would be quite as appreciable, and its effect upon the fishes quite as heroic. Surely common sense must have existed in a homœopathic state of dilution, in a mind capable of conceiving and promulgating a doctrine so preposterous as this. Such was Homœopathy: but what is it now? Does its whole strength, as heretofore, continue to lie in its weakness? Does its whole power of combating disease still increase in the ratio as the quantity of power decreases? Does it still find the decillionth part of a grain of common salt a remedy too powerful to be used without the greatest caution? If so, what has it to do with such remedies as *Morphine, Quinine, Strychnine, Veratrine*, and all their highly concentrated remedies with which the achievements of modern chemistry have so much enriched the science of medicine? We find these remedies now constituting almost the entire *Materia Medica* of the Homœopathist. But what business have they with such remedies, we repeat, when the very existence of their system depends on dilution—dilution ad infinitum. We leave it with its disciples to explain.

Now we don't question the sincerity of Hahnemann's belief in his own doctrine, but we cannot resist the conviction that his whole system is the mere reverie of a dreamer. His opinions of the efficacy of his infinitesimal doses are visionary in the extreme, and entirely unsustained by any analogy in the whole circle of human science. They owe their existence to assertion alone, and can neither be supported by argument, nor demonstrated by experiment.

We are not without suspicion that the Homœopathic physicians of the present day have themselves discovered all this; and that continuing, as heretofore, to prescribe nothing but their illimitable dilutions, they have passed into the opposite extreme, and are appropriating to themselves all the highly concentrated remedies of modern discovery, which, from the smallness of their bulk, admit of their being comprised in active doses, in size of their diminutive sugar pills. By this method they might, for a time, conceal from their employers the fact that they have abandoned their own theo-

ry, and are now practising Allopathy in disguise. But until they disown their old patron, we shall hold them to a strict account, and pinion them down to his entire theory, and to all its consequences, however embarrassing they may find them.

Is it not, then, passing strange, that a system of medicine involving so many absurdities, at variance with every principle of enlightened reason, with every admitted truth in experimental philosophy, with every known law that governs in the animal economy, should have met with the consideration it has, both in Europe and America? Its professors have even had the boldness to importune the authorities for its admission in the medical schools and colleges upon an equal footing with established medical science; or rather, we believe, as a substitute for it: although the accumulated facts of ages, and all the valuable inferences and successful modes of treatment founded upon them, it entirely repudiates. But we cannot believe that a system so erroneous can ever reach the longevity its friends claim for it. It is doomed, we think, to an early decadence. It will gradually melt away, like the parheliions or mock suns, that sometimes gild the morning twilight for an hour, but soon disappear before the effulgent glories of the broad sun in the heavens.

To Homœopathy, however, we concede its full share of cures, effected through the medium of the imagination. It is this faculty of the mind that runs riot upon every pretended discovery for the removal of human maladies. In almost every stage of human society, as far back as we trace it, we hear of the wonderful influences of magic, incantation, amulets, holy relics, and a thousand other occult agencies and extraordinary powers, that have been invoked for the cure of diseases. To these may be superadded the late revival of that monstrous delusion, that had long since, as we thought, found its grave among other arant superstitions of the day. We allude to the marvelous exhibitions now taking place in every quarter of the land, as the result of supernatural communication with the world of spirits! Such as setting chairs and tables dancing to the tune of mysterious rappings. It is not three weeks since one of these self-inspired illuminees was visiting patients in this town, under the pretense of holding communion with departed spirits—of revealing their mystic mummeries, and of making them subservient to the eradication of disease. Such shocking outrages upon the sanctities of religion—upon the decencies of social life, are but illy suited to the boasted intelligence of the 19th century. They are in better keeping with the days of Ignatius Loyola, when Florentine monks used to make a pilgrimage with their sick to the shrine of some departed saint, and if they

could but get a shred of clothing from the relic, or but touch a nail of his coffin, the patient was restored to his wonted health!

But the time may never arrive, in the history of our profession, when it shall be freed from the curse of empiricism—never, at least, so long as the human imagination is liable to be bound by the fetters of superstition and fanaticism—never, while quackery is permitted to thrive, unmolested, by legislative sanction; while it is licensed and protected by patent on the part of the government—never, while ambitious and designing men, prompted by cupidity or the love of gain, shall seek to take advantage of the ignorance and credulity of the multitude.

It is a fact greatly to be deplored that a profession that once occupied so proud an eminence as ours, to which was conceded, by universal suffrage, all that was honorable and virtuous, and dignified, should have become so humiliated by artful and false pretenders. The public mind is not sufficiently discriminate—it either cannot or will not separate the spurious and vile from that which is legitimate and true. Its judgment of physicians is too apt to be made up on that kind of evidence that relates to extrinsic merit, to a well developed exterior, rather than to intellectual or moral worth. Its eye is ever in full gaze upon him who flaunts and flutters with an air of arrogance and profundity—who looks philosophically wise, but never ventures to express an opinion where he will run the risk of wounding over-sensitive people rather fond of their own.—Its ear is open to the gossip of a thousand tongues, and half the time it refuses to give credence to any thing it hears, but the marvelous cures that have been effected by some of those medical sharks, who can scent their prey equal to any spaniel—who have brains enough, it may be, but, unluckily for them, *nature has placed them all behind*, where they respond to nothing but dollars and cents.

It is owing, most likely, to this cause—to those miserable poachers upon our profession, beguiling the public mind, and by that means robbing physicians of all that is personally dear and valuable—of their fame, their honor, and their money—that there is so little of kindly feeling, professional sympathy and fraternal good will subsisting among them. These crusades, that have been waged on the profession by quackery, have had a tendency to bear off the spoils, to narrow down the means of living, and oftentimes to reduce a lofty and magnanimous spirit, to the sad alternative of want and penury. Hence the jealousies that often arise—the resort to unworthy artifices, overreaching, it may be, in order to procure a livelihood. I know it does not belong to the genius of our profession, to be less courteous, less amiable or less concordant in their interests and

feelings than the other professions. We have been too long within its pale to give coloring to so uncharitable a sentiment. But we do know that amid all the alleged imperfections—amid all the unjust and unmerited aspersions that have been cast upon it by disingenuous and cynical minds, that regarded in the light of conferring larger benefits on the human race, of mitigating its woes, and meliorating its condition, it stands pre-eminent—it stands like Chimborazo contrasted with the tumuli bestudding its base! It has reared more lofty pyramids in the field of science than all the other professions combined. It embraces a wider range in the laws of matter and of mind, than Thales, or Pythagoras, or Aristotle, ever dreamed of. It has had to do with the stupendous and the sublime in nature. From these it has descended, by regular gradations, to the most minute and microscopic. While it could analyze a thunder cloud, and determine what the effect of its gases would be, evolved in atmospheric air, it could also stoop to the smallest animalcula that nestled in animal fluids.

The world does not know, or rather it has never acknowledged, its indebtedness to medical science. It has wielded a most powerful and extensive agency in all the achievements and enterprises of man, in all ages of the world. Who shall say it has not been instrumentally employed in carrying on the operations of fields and of cabinets—in winning to its praise the trophies of arts and of arms? It has spared the lives of men, under the direction of Providence, who have astonished the world by the brilliancy and power of their genius. Who shall say that Washington would have lived to secure the independence of his country, had it not been for the guardianship that was thrown around him by the medical profession? Who shall say that the Elgin marbles would now be in Paris, or the Cartoons of Raphael in the British Museum, but for the sovereign efficacy of our art in sparing the lives of men?

But, gentlemen, I need add no more on the genius of the medical profession. It lies open to the inspection of the world for its adjudication. When ever the time shall arrive when the balances of the sanctuary shall be poised by even-handed justice, then, and not till then, shall it receive from an enlightened public sentiment the full measure of its claims.—*Democratic Expositor.*

For the Democratic Expositor.

#### REPLY TO Dr. HENDERSHOTT.

MR. EDITOR:—Some one has been kind enough to send me a copy of the *Expositor* of May 26th, 1854, in which I find a lecture

delivered by Dr. Hendershott, before the "Springfield Medical Society," which was thought by his colleagues, as appears by a correspondence, to be worthy a place in your valuable and popular paper. I do not know if a reply to that lecture is necessary for the intelligent people of Springfield, generally speaking, for with such the lecture can do no harm; but it is possible that some of your readers may desire information, to aid them in estimating what Dr. Hendershott has said of Homœopathy.

This is an age, Mr. Editor, in which the philosophy of theories must yield to the philosophy of facts. Before I reach the chief object of this communication, indulge me in a notice of a few remarkable statements made by Dr. H. I judge that he, in his honesty and simplicity, believes that the mental and acquired abilities, and also the general reading, of his colleagues, are so limited that he could, undetected, mainly deal in declamation, which runs smoothly through the entire address. It is now thirty-four years since I commenced the study of medicine, and at that period I heard the same complaint of inadequate education on the part of physicians, and also the same statements of the progress of quackery—that is to say, "a dependence of a physician on his experience in practice, without the aid of a regular medical education." Now, during these thirty and more years, there have been a gradual increase of medical colleges in our country, until they are numerous, averaging at least six professors to each, and each of these professors delivers, annually, what is termed an introductory lecture, in which it scarcely ever fails to appear, as one of the prominent points, that *empiricism* is gaining upon the confidence of the people—all of which is owing, as it is said, to imperfect education on the part of graduated Doctors, and, according to the lecture before me, they do not learn "French and German." It seems, therefore, that up to the present time, the allopathic school has not made progress in the confidence of the people, which is remarkable, for it has had a monopoly of the teaching, and at times has had the law on its side; and its members, as does Dr. H., boldly assert that the learning, the skill, the honesty, and every quality that usually commands respect, and gives influence, is possessed by that school. It claims that allopathic physicians constitute the medical profession entire, and no one should be thought worthy of confidence who is not in full communion with that school. This, it is asserted, the people are bound to believe, because these learned and talented gentlemen say so themselves, and they cannot be excelled in arrogance. But enough of this. As I pass to the chief subject of my remarks, I will briefly notice what is said of the late Dr. Benjamin Rush, on whom Dr. Hendershott bestows very high praise. What did

Dr. Rush do to improve the healing art?—His theory in regard to disease is not now received, except by the *Chronothermalists*—in fact, it never was, only by a few.—But what did he do? He taught physicians to give ten grains of *Calomel* and ten grains of *Jalap* at a dose in yellow fever, and since his day Allopathists generally, especially "out West," have extended his idea, and give *Calomel*, not in ten grain doses, but in twenty; and it was once said to me, by a Western physician, it was not necessary to weigh it, but give it by the spoonful. But what else did he do? He taught, based upon a false theory, as Allopathists themselves admit, excessive blood letting; which constitutes, so far as the healing art is concerned, all of Dr. Rush, except that he advised physicians to send in their bills as soon as they had rendered service, which, I admit, would be well for all parties concerned to follow. Such was the service to the healing art whom Dr. H. lauds thus: "His work struck an everlasting root, that will bear perennial blossoms on his grave."

I remember, years ago, a disciple of Rush removed to Havana to establish himself in practice. He had already acquired some reputation in his native city, and he was brilliantly gazetted on his arrival in that city, and was called soon to attend cases of yellow fever. True to the teachings of his preceptor, Rush, he commenced their treatment with copious bleedings, and the powders of ten and ten; but alas! his patients died, while the physicians of that city were so accustomed to cure the natives of that fever with *barley water* or other diluent drinks, that not only they; but the people, thought that physician incompetent who could not cure nearly every case of yellow fever. The consequence was, Rush's disciple, from necessity, was compelled to leave for want of professional encouragement.—At the present time, if any one, even Dr. Hendershott himself, should adopt Dr. Rush's theory and practice, a single year would end his professional reputation; and it is my opinion, thrown out for what it is worth, that no man has done more to diminish the confidence of the people, in allopathic practice than Dr. Rush.

I wonder that Dr. H. consented to the publication of a lecture so exceedingly loose in its statements, and so very illogical in its reasoning. His colleagues, I can hardly think, undertook to "humbug" him in requesting its publication; yet this may be so, for in my day I have known such things in the allopathic school.

Dr. H. says:—"We have, therefore, the satisfaction of knowing that the profession of medicine has kept an even pace with the other sciences in the progressive spirit of the age; that it is not only now in a state of advancement, but even advancing with increasing rapidity: and the present indications seem to promise that, as it becomes



more and more elevated by the agencies now called into requisition, new facts will be continually discovered, and those which are already known will be better understood and more beneficially applied."

I rejoice that Dr. H. has made this important discovery, and perhaps it was the above paragraph that led his colleagues to request the publication of the lecture; for the matter above quoted must have been new to them as it is to me—"that the profession of medicine has kept an even pace with the other sciences."

I am, Mr. Editor, somewhat acquainted with the published opinions of most of the acknowledged leading minds of the "profession of medicine," and these have declared, again and again, directly the contrary.—Even the New York Academy of Medicine is against Dr. H. Therefore, I say Dr. H. has made a discovery of so much value, that I regret, and so will his school, he did not devote his whole lecture to that single point, and give the world the particulars, by showing whether allopathic medicine is a science or not, which many of that school very much doubt; and then he should have pointed out in what it has made progression, leaving out, of course, what Hahnemann and his disciples have taught, which, I know, has, in the short time of fifty years, done more to advance the treatment of diseases and modify allopathic practice than any thing for nearly fourteen hundred years; for no one recognized by the profession dared to treat diseases contrary to Galen for thirteen hundred years; and even now the allopathic school, with all its boasting of advancement, virtually treats diseases as advised by Galen; if any change has taken place in the practice, approaching a principle, it has been brought about by the influence of Hahnemann.

Dr. H.'s remarks on Homœopathy are in keeping with the other branches of the lecture—loose, flippant, illogical and unwise. A wise critic will always seek for and remove the basis of the doctrine he opposes; he would tear up the tree he wishes to destroy by the roots—not merely cut off a twig, and proclaim that the tree is demolished. Dr. H. has only attempted to remove a twig from the tree of Homœopathy; but he is a poor workman, even at twig clipping, for he has failed in his object.

I will take Dr. H. as I find him in his lecture, and examine what he says of Homœopathy. He takes the recorded symptoms in Hahnemann's *Materia Medica*, of *Muriate of Soda* or common table salt, and undertakes, by bold assertion and ridicule combined, to show that Homœopathy is false, and takes rank with the *empiricism* of the day. He has made Hahnemann say of common salt what I do not find in the record; therefore, the lecturer is guilty of misrepresentation. My reply is, does Dr. Hendershott know that common salt does not cause,

in the healthy human body, the symptoms recorded by Hahnemann? Has he tried it, as Hahnemann and others did? Unless he has experimented in this respect, he is utterly incompetent to discuss the subject. Dr. H. takes common salt as an example to show the fallacy of Homœopathy, because, says he, its "properties are familiar to all." Now, if he means its chemical properties, he approximates the truth, but if he means, which undoubtedly he does, that the effects of common salt in the human system "are familiar to all," then he is wrong.

Can Dr. H. deny, from positive knowledge that many of the aches and pains, which thousands from time to time suffer, may not be the effect of common salt? Can he assert, of his own knowledge, or that of his school, that many, if not all of those who suffer from "acid and acrid risings with taste of food; water-brash, some times followed by sour vomiting of food; pressure at the pit of the stomach, as if there were a hard body in the stomach; epigastrium swollen and painful when touched or pressed; cramps in the stomach, sometimes with nausea; shooting pains in the hepatic region; cutting and pinching sensation in the abdomen; flatus in the abdomen; difficult evacuation of feces, often with shooting pains in the rectum and anus; a feeling of burning in the anus and rectum during and after the evacuations; hæmorrhoidal tumors in the anus." These and many other symptoms are said to be caused by common salt in the homœopathic *Materia Medica*. Now, I remark, the above symptoms, more or less, are complained of almost daily by persons who consult physicians. Can Dr. H. declare that common salt, which is taken "with every meal," may not be the real cause of the sufferings? Does he know that it is not so? I do not mean to be understood that other causes may not induce such or very similar symptoms. I know other drugs that do so, but for a reply to Dr. H. that is of no consequence. I assert it for a fact, that many persons have satisfied themselves, by their own experience, that common salt, as used in diet, was injurious to their health—so much so, that its use is abandoned by many. But Dr. H. may say, but Hahnemann's attenuations of salt are a different thing, and it is to these he objects. I answer, this places the matter still in uncertainty, having Hahnemann's experiments and experience in the one hand, and Dr. H.'s prejudice and allopathic "common sense" in the other, which leaves the question where it was, so far as Dr. H. is concerned, and, therefore, his comments have no force for or against Homœopathy; for Homœopathy is not based upon common salt; nor can the "common sense" reasoning of Allopathists ever demolish it. Dr. H. uses the term "common sense" as if it were an immutable law of Nature, while the fact is, "common



sense" is constantly changing. What was "common sense" at one time, is found after awhile, to be no sense at all. In my own time it was thought by Allopathists contrary to "common sense," as taught by Dr. Rush and others, to allow thirsting fever patients to drink cold water; but that sense has changed in regard to that, and it is now looked upon contrary to common sense to deny the cold water. Thus we see that "common sense" always changes with the development of facts, for it deals in facts alone. How much that "species of empiricism," hydropathy, has had to do in correcting allopathic "common sense," I do not know.

Dr. Hendershott charges Homœopaths with abandoning Hahnemann's dilutions, and "appropriating to themselves all the highly concentrated remedies of modern discovery, which, from the smallness of their bulk, admit of their being comprised in active doses in size of their diminutive sugar pills." Now, if I were to apply the law rule to Dr. H., viz: "false in one thing, false in all," I should take this sentence of his for the evidence. It is remarkable that a man, unless he thought his hearers and readers dunces, would hazard his reputation for professional learning and integrity, by such a barefaced misrepresentation. In the first place, there are no "highly concentrated remedies of modern discovery." What "highly concentrated remedies of modern discovery" have Allopathists?—Does he mean *Morphine* and *Strychnine*? What "concentrated" remedy is used in small bulk by Allopathists? Has any sick person received at their hands any drug or prescription in "small bulk"? If *Morphine* were employed in appreciable doses by homœopaths, their patients would know it, for they are much better acquainted with the effects of *Morphine* than with common table salt. If *Strychnine* were used by Homœopaths in the quantity that would be absorbed by the "sugar pills," death would follow their administration. What other "highly concentrated remedies" there are I do not know—in truth, I am quite sure there are none; and Dr. H. is either guilty of ignorance or deceit. I hope, for the sake of the morality of the profession, it may be the former. If, however, he knows what he says to be true, why did he not state what "remedies" are used in that way by Homœopaths, and charge the deception home to the school?

I am, Mr. Editor, nearly through with my comments. Dr. H. "concedes to Homœopathy its full share of cures, but effected through the medium of the imagination." It would, perhaps, be enough for me only to say that it cannot be denied, and even Dr. H. admits, that Homœopathy has effected cures, and its "full share," too. Why, then, it is really of no consequence what the "medicine" is, even should it be "im-

agination" alone. But here the reader may see again how strangely loose Dr. H. is in the use of words which he should have avoided, for if he reflected at all on the publication of his lecture, he should have expected that some body would undertake a reply. I will try to examine this sentence. Cures are effected by Homœopathy. Now, there can be no cure where there is no sickness—a real sickness, not a fanciful one. In the next place, it is contrary to universal experience, and to all laws of which we have knowledge, that "imagination," in any sense in which the word is properly used, can possibly cure a disease. Here we have one of the most remarkable fallacies of the opposition of Allopathists to Homœopathy. "Her cures," say they, "are effected by imagination;" that is, ninety-three per cent, of cholera patients are cured by imagination, while Allopathists employ drugs in large doses and cure only about forty per cent. These are facts, as equally authentic statistics show. This assertion of Dr. H. is unwise, for thousands of his readers, without my aid, will perceive its absurdity.

I will notice, Mr. Editor, but one point more. It is in these words: "Is it not, then, passing strange, that a system of medicine involving so many absurdities, at variance with every principle of enlightened reason, with every admitted truth in experimental philosophy, with every known law that governs in the animal economy, should have met with the consideration it has, both in Europe and America?" Will Dr. H. name a single principle, or a truth in experimental philosophy, that is at variance with any principle of Homœopathy? Why did he not name one? The reason is, he could not.

I have now said, Mr. Editor, all that I think necessary; what ever else there is in the lecture may have all its force, for mere declamation in regard to scientific subjects amounts to but little in the end to influence the public mind. It is not my habit to call an opponent names, nor make mouths at him, but in all sincerity, not having any knowledge of Dr. Hendershott but what his lecture develops, I must say this production of his, taken as a whole, is strikingly characteristic of a braggadocio sort of mind and education, and it does strike my mind that if Dr. H. appears again in print, it would not hurt him to think a little more, and understand the subject of which he writes. I do not know, Mr. Editor, what your views may be in admitting this article in reply to Dr. H., but to me it seems but an act of justice that you should admit it, although I may have been somewhat severe, perhaps on a very worthy, although mistaken gentlemen; but I have not been half as severe on him as he has been on us, for we are charged virtually with, not only folly, but knavery. I do not think it fair to

write anonymously, therefore, I subscribe myself,

Your's, respectfully,  
S. R. KIRBY, M.D.,

Editor of the American Journal of Homœopathy,

New York City, June 2d, 1854.

*For the Democratic Expositor.*

# **HOMŒOPATHY FURTHER CONSIDERED —DR. KIRBY REVIEWED.**

MR. EDITOR:—

When I delivered my Lecture before the Annual Meeting of the Clark County Medical Society, I could not foresee the results that were to follow—that I was to be the innocent cause of so much flutter and confusion among the Infinitesimal Doctors. For really, sir, their covortings and jactitations have very much resembled the movements of a skinned eel. I have never I believe, been accused of self-adulation, but judging from the warlike attitude of these gentlemen, East and West, it would seem I might justly claim to myself the merit of having done some execution. It was exceedingly deferential in you, after forewarning me that you had upon your files a triplicity of attack upon me, that you suffered but one assailant to appear at a time, lest I should be overpowered by Professional subtlety and sheer argumentation; this was an instance of Editorial urbanity, rarely to be mentioned.

Agreeably then, to the order of presentation, I am to make my first salutation to Dr. S. R. Kirby, a gentleman of marked distinction, enjoying the matured and well earned honors of Professor of the Homœopathic College in the City of New York, and conductor of one of its Journals. It might seem, therefore, a little presumptuous for one of so humble pretensions as myself, to stand forth as the belligerent of this modern Goliath, although, like his renowned prototype, he seems not to be fully aware of his vulnerability, and that a well directed shaft from an allopathic quiver, might send him reeling from the field.

Dr. Kirby has evinced more sagacity than good taste or benevolence in assailing the character of Dr. Rush, a name that stands so high in the scale of Professional eminences, whose memory has never before been insulted, even by the Gothic hands of the vilest medical pretender; a tower of strength in every Department of Science and Philology, that must overshadow to the remotest generation, the dwarfish intellects that would vainly essay to demolish it. It is disingenuous in Dr. Kirby to conceal the fact, that for many years he was the disciple of Rush, and fattened on the spoils he had indirectly provided for the support of his early professional life.

Having basely abjured the doctrines he at first received, and so long defended, he is now so obviously bent on their destruction, that, like the foe of Carthage, he is determined not to leave a pillar standing, though, like Marius, he is often compelled to rest on its ruins.

It is clearly evident that Dr. Kirby had made up his mind to put every thing at hazard with the Professional reader, in view of securing an illegible *status* with his readers at large. What else can be his motive in decrying the use of *Calomel*, Rush's "ten and ten," including the use of the lancet in the treatment of febrile diseases? It is against these remedial agents, possessing such sovereign efficacy in the hands of enlightened practitioners, that the whole charlatanism of the Profession, has inveighed. It has been by this eternal play upon the prejudices and credulity of the masses, that it has wormed its devious way to fame and fortune. Now what can we think of a man, a grave Professor, hoary with years, but with unblushing shamelessness, who will assert that Yellow Fever, in the South, has been successfully treated by water gruel and baby's porridge. It is modest in him, however, to have said nothing of the Placebo of the Homœopath; but the man who can make such a statement, is either incorrigibly ignorant, or does not profess to be governed by a very high standard of morals.

The Dr. further observes, that "a wise critic will always seek for, and remove the basis of the doctrine he opposes." Here then is tacit acknowledgment that Homœopathy has something on which to repose; about as much I should think as Archimedes found when looking for a place to plant his fulcrum; about as much, Dr. Kirby, as you will find in the dreams of an Alchemist, or a Virginia abstraction. I look upon it as less than a residuum of a trifle, the product of a quarter of a cypher, the epitome of nothing, fitter to be kicked, if it were a kicking substance, than to be honored or humored. It avowedly contends with disease beyond materiality; it wrestles not with flesh and blood, and truly its weapons are not carnal, for the qualities of its medicines elude analysis, and their bulk defies the microscope.

The oddest thing about this animalculoid practice is the solemn simplicity with which the very few medical men who trade in it, present their claims to public confidence; they invariably declare that they have been fearfully unsuccessful in their attempts at regular practice—that medicines in their hands have proved deadly doses, and that they have been fairly lashed out of the Profession by the whip of conscience!

Again Dr. Kirby remarks that "this is an age in which the philosophy of theories must yield to the philosophy of facts," or according to the true version of the senti-

ment, we are to lose sight of all principles, and be governed by facts and experience alone; this is Homœopathy undisguised. We will test the validity of this predicate, and in doing so, we will concede that a person may be taught many of the practical arts of life, to a certain extent, without possessing any knowledge of their principles. He may learn to navigate a ship, so long as she lays fair to the wind, with little knowledge of the principles of navigation, or he may construct a dial without any acquaintance with Astronomy, or Spherical Trigonometry. But order the navigator to make a sudden tack and steer a new course; or the dialist to take a new aspect, and from a total deficiency in the first principles of their respective arts, they would be utterly unable to succeed. An individual placed behind the counter of an Apothecary may soon acquire a knowledge of the names, and some of the general properties of the medicines he vends. He will readily learn that this is an opiate, that a stimulant, a third article is purgative, and a fourth emetic; but without having a thorough knowledge of the principles which should govern, in the application of these medicines, would any one say he should be allowed to prescribe, or recommend their use to others? The thing is absurd.

It were needless, however, to multiply instances to illustrate the fallacy of relying on facts and experience to the exclusion of the "Philosophy of Theories." Homœopathy abnegates all theory. It is essentially automatical, and works its disciples a good deal after the fashion that a tanner works his horse in a bark mill. There may be honorable exceptions, but a large proportion of its practical votaries are as ignorant of physiology and pathology, as a Western aborigine; and so far as it relates to anatomy, they know about as much, I presume, as a Cincinnati pork packer.

Professor Kirby takes his chowder without salt—of course he does—for he makes it the villainous cause of all the diseases that flesh is heir to. But then there are exceptions to all general rules. Without the use of this *malum prohibitum*, whence comes all these "acrid risings, bilious eructations, and excessive flatulencies," that are constantly rising to the surface of his communication. Dr. Johnson has said that any man who has no salt in his conversation is a dunce. What, then, becomes of Professor Kirby, since the non-salted blood supplies the brain with its pabulum?

In the language of Dr. Kirby, I must say of him as he has said of me, that "I have no knowledge of him except what his reply develops." I have not even the means of knowing what his standing was in the former vocation; but I should think, when he left the sacerdotal office, and made a plunge into the whirlpool of Homœopathy, he

placed himself *inversely* in the scale of moral elevation. I hope, however, he will keep an eye on his original investment, and not forget his devotional exercise at a more seductive shrine.

Dr. Kirby challenges me with a somewhat defiant air, to "name a single principle or truth in experimental philosophy, that is at variance with any principle of Homœopathy." Why, sir, there is any amount of Hahnemann's dogmas that positively contravene every law of experience, and every fact that is founded on pathological demonstration. For example, he assumes that diseases are cured by remedies that are capable of producing similar morbid affections in the healthy subject—that there is an analogous property in remedies when applied in opposite conditions of the system. To make the case still plainer, he asserts that *Peruvian Bark*, given to a healthy person, produces chill and fever. The same properties are claimed for *Arsenic* and *Sulphate of Zinc*, though they are known to cure intermittents; but if taken in health, a similar disease is induced. Now, nothing would be easier than to show from experience that facts do not warrant the premises, or the deductions drawn from them.

How Dr. Kirby's master ever conceived of so silly a paradox as this, is beyond the comprehension of any man who is not hopelessly demented.

It is denied, by my distinguished correspondent, that the imagination has any thing to do in the cure of diseases—that "it is contrary to universal experience, and to all laws of which we have any knowledge."—After I shall have cited a few cases tending to show the absurdity of this proposition, we will hear the Dr. again upon this subject. A case came within my own cognizance a few years ago, while residing in the city of Cincinnati, in refutation of the Dr.'s position. The Rev. Mr. S., a minister of eminent standing in the M. E. Church, was suddenly attacked with violent pain in the head, functional derangement of the stomach, with slight chills and fever. Having firm persuasion in the efficacy of homœopathic medicine, he proposed sending for Dr. P., the principal physician of that school, then in the city. His wife, a lady of intelligence, and possessing a fine stock of that "common sense" which Dr. Kirby takes occasion to villify and abuse, remonstrated with her husband in venturing his case upon so dubious a system of practice. He was persistent, however, in his determination, and a messenger was immediately dispatched for Dr. P. He soon returned with six small powders, done up, *secundum artem*, in white sugar, with instructions to give one every two hours until all were taken. Mrs. S. believing this to be a fit opportunity to test the power of imagination in disease, incontinently locked up the



powders in her chest, and substituted six others of the pure, unadulterated sugar. After the second dose had been given, there was an evident remission of the symptoms. As each successive powder was taken, there was a gradual surrendering of all the morbid indications, until about the space of 12 or 14 hours—the patient was entirely recovered. It now only remained for the Rev. gentleman to rally his wife on the signal victory that had been achieved in honor of Homœopathy, stating with great *empressement*, that “if your Allopathists had been called on, I should have been kept bed-ridden for several days—perhaps weeks. What a God’s blessing to humanity is this Homœopathy!” Ah! little did he think how suddenly those visions of delight and ecstasy were to pass away with the developments of the next moment. That little drawer had been the depository of a truth that was to dumbfounder the good man, and to place his wife, in her turn, in a more triumphant position. “Here, Mr. S—, here are Dr. P.’s infinitesimal powders. I laid them snugly in my drawer, thinking my own loaf sugar would taste quite as well, and cure you as speedily as his.” It is needless to add that the parson, badgered as he was, asked for his hat and cane, and immediately repaired to his study.

Some two or three years ago, a lady in the city of New York, was slightly bitten by a large dog—so slightly, indeed, that doubts were entertained whether any actual wound had been inflicted, there being no trace of injury—when her physician, an eminent Homœopath, was called in. (Now, this may have been a case of Dr. Kirby’s; if so, I shall be happy to know that he is entitled to the merit of conducting it to so happy an issue.) The gentlemen at first made very light of the case, supposing it to be one of the modified forms of hysteria, and would shortly pass off. He prescribed, however, a spoonful of the “green of elder,” to be scraped downwards, assuring her that if any of the hydrophobic virus was in the system, it would be carried off by purging. But this would not do. The symptoms of that horrible malady began to increase, insomuch that the lady shuddered at water, and even snapped at the bystanders disfiguring, the while, her cherry lips with foam. Here the disciple of Hahnemann was in a fix. After laying his index along side of his nose for a few minutes, the thought struck him like a flash of electricity—*similia similibus curantur*—like will cure like. He retired for a short time, and returned, bringing with him a small basket. Addressing his patient with characteristic courtesy, he said, “Well, madam, I am now confident of a cure,” producing, at the same moment, a sweet little love of a dog, he begged the lady to submit to the *slightest possible bite*, as that would be the true

remedy in the infinitesimal dose. The lady, of course consented, and a cure was speedily effected.

Sir Astley Cooper was once consulted by a lady, who verily believed she had swallowed a spider. After a few pertinent inquiries made by the venerable but astute Professor, he told her she was mistaken in the cause of her illness—to go home and take some simple medicine, which he prescribed, and if she was no better on the following day to call again. Accordingly she came with an evident augmentation of the symptoms. She felt the viperous insect clawing her stomach, sometimes ascending to the throat, as if about to make its exit. Sir Astley saw at once the hallucination, and immediately resolved upon an expedient to relieve her. He told her he could eject the spider by placing a fly at the door of her mouth—that so soon as the vile intruder should discover his prey, he would spring upon it from his ventral abode, and take to other quarters. The suggestion was approved of as one of high and encouraging promise. He then retired for a few minutes, and having stealthily procured a spider, concealed it in such a way, as to liberate it *ad libitum*. No sooner had the fly commenced its curvettings at the lady’s mouth, then out leaped the spider to the inexpressible joy and delight of the patient.

About the close of the last century, an American, whose name was Perkins, went over to England, and introduced a new method of curing diseases, for which he obtained the Royal Letters Patent, by means of two small pieces of metal denominated *Tractors*. These Tractors were applied externally, near the part diseased and were moved about, gently touching the surface. By this wonderful discovery, multitudes of painful disorders were removed: some quite speedily, and others after repeated applications of the metallic points. Pamphlets were published, and Periodical Journals, and newspapers teemed with the evidence of the curative powers of the Tractors. A Perkinian Institution was immediately founded, under government auspices, for the purpose of curing the diseases of the poor without the expense of drugs or medical advice. The result was, that in less than six years, Perkins left the country in possession of ten thousand pounds, the contributions of British credulity; but in ten years the celebrated Tractors were entirely forgotten.

Now, mark, reader, the whole efficacy of this remedial agent was founded in delusion. The Tractors were constructed of two different metals, and claimed to act on the galvanic principle, or animal electricity. It was believed by many that Perkins was an impostor, and his pretended discovery a shameless and impudent fraud upon the



Government. Dr. Haygarth, a philosopher, to whom his profession and his country were deeply indebted for more important services, suspected the true source of the phenomena. He accordingly suggested that the nature of the operation of the metallic tractor might be correctly ascertained by a pair of counterfeit ones resembling the original. He resolved to put the matter to the test of experiment in the general Hospital in the City of Bath. He therefore contrived two wooden tractors neatly painted, so as to resemble those made by Perkins. Five cases were then chosen of chronic rheumatism, in the ankle, knee, wrist, and hip—the wooden tractors were employed, and what would the reader suppose was the report of Dr. Haygarth? why that four cases out of the five were pronounced *cured*!!

Such is the wonderful force of the imagination; and there lies the key that unlocks four-fifths of the mysteries of Homœopathy, and its cognate impostures.

I am now through with Dr. Kirby. I have had no other design in this communication, but to reclaim him from his errors, and cool down his apostolic zeal in a cause, which if he even now would abandon, he might once more become *renascent*, and be restored again to his forfeited Professional honors.

I. HENDERSHOTT.

Springfield, O., June 29, 1854.

For the Democratic Expositor.

#### MEDICAL CONTROVERSY.

MR. EDITOR: In your paper of June 30th, I find an article from Dr. Hendershott, which purports to be a reply to mine of June 16th. I advise the reader who feels an interest in the controversy to read carefully Dr. H.'s address of May 26th, in connection with the above; and then he will be prepared to understand this one, and not otherwise, for I have avoided lengthy quotations.

It is to me not unpleasant to engage in a controversy on medical subjects, when my opponent is intelligent and deals fairly, avoiding hypercriticisms, ridicule, personalities, and unjust insinuations, which have no basis whatever. Such a course in an opponent I usually treat as I would wrapping paper and twine, which a merchant uses about the goods purchased of him. Your readers, Mr. Editor, do not "care a fig" whether Dr. H. or Dr. K. are fools or otherwise, or whether they be men of wit or learning. They do not care and have no interest in the matter, if these Doctors should see fit to blackguard one another in the columns of the Expositor, until you, Mr. Editor, would think it proper to charge them advertisement prices for the privilege of indulging in that sort of buffoonery. Nor will the public mind be influenced by

the extravagant stories each could invent from the practice of each other, or from the absurd practice in individual cases, however well authenticated; for each of these gentlemen could compile cases from the schools to which they respectively belong, out of the silly conduct of practitioners, which would cause a laugh; but such cases would be of no value in any sense, unless to show—what, by the by, every body knows—that the medical profession embraces men who are ignorant, unskillful, and can practice charlatanry. I shall, therefore, Mr. Editor, pass by all that part of my opponent's communication that comes under this head, if any of it does so: for I know nothing of the cases he relates; but if true, they prove nothing for or against Homœopathy: for in neither case, by Dr. H.'s own showing, was it employed.

Every unprejudiced and candid reader sees that Dr. H. misrepresents the plain and obvious meaning of my article. Now, Dr. H. is either a very careless reader, or he is guilty of unfairness unworthy of him. I never assailed "the character of Dr. Rush." His character was not even alluded to directly, nor by fair inference. Is a man's character assailed when his opinions are rejected? This is a new doctrine to me, and I reject it, not because it is new, but because it is not true; and if my opponent thereby thinks I am "assailing his character," he must bear the affliction as one of those things inseparable from the imperfection of human knowledge.

The question, and the only question at issue between Dr. H. and myself is—Is Homœopathy true? To this question I shall hold Dr. Hendershott; for if I am as old and experienced as he represents, I ought to know enough not to allow my opponent, by misrepresentation and a flourish of words, which signify little, to lead me away from the point at issue. Dr. H., by a quotation which we read two or three years ago in a newspaper, undertakes to show that Homœopathy has no basis. This quotation, for it is such, although not so marked, which, I presume, was the fault of the printer, is a mere play of words. It contains no proof nor argument; but as I cannot expect my opponent to prove a negative, I will try to show that Homœopathy has at least four legs, and these, like every scientific truth, are based upon the great Author of all truth; and if we show these legs and prove their existence, we shall not contend with Dr. H. about their basis.

1st. Homœopathy rests upon a well established, and, I may say, universally acknowledged physiological principle—*vital dynamism*.

2d. On a pathological principle—the *dynamic nature of disease*. This doctrine was advocated by the celebrated Stahl, a long time ago; and recently by Professor Paine,

of the New York University, in his great work on the "Institutes of Medicine," as well as others, all of whom are admitted authorities in the allopathic school.

3d. On a principle of *Materia Medica*, viz: *Pure experimentation*. This Dr. H. denies, by ridiculing the idea that *Peruvian Bark* causes, in the healthy human system, symptoms similar to a form of intermittent fever. This can be determined only by *pure* experiment, which Dr. H. admits, but before he experiments, he denies the results that others have reached who have experimented. On a subject like this, such reasoning is absurd.

4th. On a principle of therapeutics—*Similia similibus curantur*, or like cures like.—The allopathic school has no therapeutic law. For the information of the uninitiated reader, we mean a law "that respects the discovery and application of remedies for diseases." In the allopathic school, every discovery of a remedy, and every application of a remedy for diseases, is *empirical*; that is, used and applied without science. Allopathy employs medicine by a loose experience, without a law, whilst Homœopathy employs medicine by an accurate experience, with a law; which constitutes the one empirical and the other scientific. Now, if Dr. Hendershott is well read in the literature of his own school, he dare not contradict what I here state, of the empirical character of Allopathy. And it is this fact which accounts for the irregularities of the practice of that school. It is this fact that shows the origin of the professional pride, vanity, and charlatanism of a large proportion of the members of that school. That school has accurate knowledge of diseases, but it does not know how to cure them. Its chief blunder is this: It undertakes to deduce a theory of cure from a theory of disease. This was the error of Dr. Rush, and all who preceded him. In that school theories of disease have often changed by different writers, and of course a theory of cure must be invented to agree with it. So it was with Rush, Broussais, and others. This is a fact, and cannot be gainsayed, for it is the chief history of medicine for twenty-four hundred years. Hahnemann never undertook to establish a theory of disease, nor a theory of cure. Homœopathy is a method of cure, and strictly speaking it is no theory at all. Its mode of cure is not deduced from a theory of disease, for it cannot change, however much our knowledge of diseases may increase. Let me examine this carefully, that it may be seen whether I am right:

1st. The existence of *vitality* in the human body is a fact, and not a theory.

2d. That a disturbance of the vital action, or, if you please, of the functions of one or more organs of the human body, give rise to phenomena we term disease, is

also a fact, and no theory. In some few instances the causes are known, but in most they are not. This disturbance gives rise to symptoms, some of which are felt by the person who is the subject of them, and others are seen by the physician and those in attendance, all of which are facts, and no theories.

Haller, the physiologist, I think it was, stated that we could never know the effects of drugs in the human system until they were taken singly and while in health, and record the effects. Hahnemann and many others undertook this labor, and it resulted in the development of the fact, not theory, that drugs would cause groups of symptoms in the human system that resembled those of various diseases; and by experiment in numerous cases, and for years, it was found that when a drug was administered to a person sick, the known symptoms of which were similar to those of the disease, a cure followed; and the nearest similarity of the drug symptoms to the disease symptoms, the more prompt and certain the cure. This also became an established fact. It was found also that each drug had characteristic symptoms, which distinguishes it from all others, although it may have hundreds of symptoms in common with others. In connection with these facts, it was perceived that in the empirical practice of the allopathic school from Hypocrates down to Hahnemann's time, cures were accidentally made by virtue of the law, developed by the above facts.

4th. The law of cure was thus made known, existing in nature. This law was perceived by Hypocrates, and spoken of by him. Others spoke of it down to Paracelsus, who boldly asserted that diseases should be cured on the principle, "*similia similibus curantur*." But these men did not perceive the necessity of forming a *Materia Medica* by *pure experimentation* on the healthy system. If they had, the honor of the discovery of Homœopathy would never have fallen upon Hahnemann.

Galen, in opposition to Paracelsus, advanced for a law of cure, "*contraria contrariis curantur*," or contraries cure contraries, and it is remarkable, that for thirteen hundred years, not a writer on medical subjects, so far as I know, perceived that this could not be a law at all. It is an absurdity. A patient has pain. What drug has the contrary? What symptom is contrary to a headache?

I perceive, Mr. Editor, my letter is growing too large. I must close. But my opponent will say I have omitted the "small doses." The use of "small doses," is no theory, but a fact, like all the rest.

It was found by experiment that the ordinary doses of the old school would often do harm. Gradually the dose was diminished, until it became so small that no theory could have induced any sane man

to have the least confidence in it. But when even the 30th attenuation of Hahnemann was taken, where the symptoms of the drugs were strikingly similar to those of the disease, almost instantaneous effects were produced in a full relief from suffering. One and another began to admit the presence of medicinal power even in so high an attenuation. Here, too, the Homœopathic school deals in fact, and not theory. I have thus, as briefly as I am able presented Homœopathy. We now ask Dr. Hendershott to say with what principle in philosophy is Homœopathy inconsistent? If there were one thing more than another which was uppermost in my mind during the five years we devoted to the study of Homœopathy before we publicly embraced it, it was that its principles were consistent with every known law of Nature; even the salvation of man is based upon the law of similarity.

If Dr. H. expects me to notice him further, he must, as a man of mind and education, boldly meet the question at issue. I have no time to spend in child's play on paper. I have no desire to examine him personally, but if it would gratify him to look into my personal history, and spread it before the public, I have no objections; for I have lived forty years in the same city, and not a very obscure life either. From the age of nineteen I have had but one purpose—to become as good a physician as my abilities would admit of; and from that time to the present, I have had no other "vocation," except during my studentship. I was compelled for a while to be a "Yankee school-master," which I never discovered did me any harm.

But Dr. H. may have had wealthy parents; and he does not know what it is to be a medical student with an empty purse, or he would never have been guilty of an attempt at detraction by an insinuation of "a former vocation." If I am not dealing with a gentleman, Mr. Editor, have the kindness to burn these sheets, for I will not knowingly encounter in controversy any one who is capable of violating the rules of courtesy. My life is devoted to the promulgation of what I believe to be a true system of healing. I am ready to give any man a reason for my doctrine.

Dr. Hendershott has, so far as I am concerned, to confine himself to his objections to Homœopathy, and he should know that the only standard work of our school is Hahnemann's Organon, and his Materia Medica, or what is about the same thing, Jahr's Manual, although there are many errors in the last New York edition. Every Homœopathist should be tried by these standards. I have nothing to do with mongrels, nor half-educated physicians, who may attempt to practice our art. It is bad taste, and shows a weakness on his side, to introduce such. They have their

uses, and their interference with either of us will not amount to much. If we are better qualified to relieve human maladies, the people will not pass us by unheeded. If we meet a person of honest purpose, who, from poverty or other causes, has not had the advantages of a proper medical education, rather than denounce and discourage him, the better course is to instruct and encourage him, so that he, in his ignorance, may do as little harm as possible.

I am now through with what I have to say, and neither you nor Dr. Hendershott will be troubled more by me, unless Dr. H. enters upon the discussion of the real question at issue, and keeps to that alone.

S. R. KIRBY, M.D.

New York City, July 20th, 1854.

For the Democratic Expositor.

### THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER!

MR. EDITOR:—At this particular junction of the planets, when the dog-star rages with incandescent fury, sending his fiery breath through every department of blood and brain and nerve and muscle, it is a great relief to be exonerated, *ex cathedra*, from the agonizing pangs of literary parturition. This favor you have conferred on me by your late caveat on the homœopathic controversy.

I had supposed, Sir, that Dr. Kirby had made his last demonstration; that after burying his light for more than forty days, we should no more see its brilliant corrugations in the benighted regions of the West. But lo, and behold! on opening the *Expositor* of the 4th instant, I find he has been running his pen through two columns of Hahnemannian lore, and has presented us with an image resembling an Apocalyptic beast, on "four legs," armed with horns and hoofs, and hide and hair, which is enough, in all conscience, to frighten any one, who has not been familiar all his life with the scenes of a professional charnel-house!

But badinage aside. I would no more undertake to give an analysis of Dr. Kirby's last production, than I would consent to act as interpreter to all the tribes of men that now roam at large over this Polyglot earth. It is the most perfect vomition of words, without sense or meaning, that has ever come under my notice, and hence, Sir, at the instance of the Press, and in accordance with my own feelings, I bid Dr. Kirby a final, but respectful adieu.

I. HENDERSHOTT.

August 4th, 1854.

Thus the controversy ends. The Springfield, Ohio, champion for the defense of Allopathy "backs down." The weather is



too hot for him. What the Editor of the *Expositor* may have said in private to the Doctor, we do not know, but we have not seen any thing in print, which warrants Dr. H.'s insinuations in regard to him.

We admit that Dr. H. shows more wisdom in abandoning the controversy, than in our mind, we gave him credit for. When he finds there is more in Homœopathy, than he knew of when he made the attack upon it in his address, like a good soldier he ceases to attempt a defense of his position.

But in justice to Dr. Headerschott, we should say, that he has done as well, and accomplished as much as those who have gone before him on the same side. We refer to Dr. Holmes, the poet, Dr. Simpson, of Edinburgh, a Professor in the New Haven College, whose name we have forgotten, and a host of scribblers for medical Journals.

#### SUGAR VERSUS CHOLERA!!

"Sugar Pills and Faith constitute the essence of Homœopathy"—so say the Allopaths. But the latest proof of their efficacy comes from the pen of Dr. J. J. Macintosh, and appears in a late number of the *Lancet*. He asserts that under the use of *Sugar*, in thirteen cases of collapse, nine recovered! He recommends it as follows: two ounces of refined *Sugar* are dissolved in six ounces of *Camphor* mixture, with a few drops of rectified *Spirit*; dose, a tablespoonful every ten minutes. To this was frequently added a little wine and beef tea.

This is certainly a great discovery; but, as Homœopaths, we are bound to establish our own claims to originality. Why not? If Allopaths will have it that we give only sugar, then we certainly have the preference, because of having employed it long before Dr. Macintosh's experiments proved its superior efficacy over the Old Hunker practice of his "Regular" brethren; otherwise we *will* have the credit of first using *Camphor*; for it was a remedy first pointed out by Hahnemann before he had witnessed a single case of Cholera. Now *we* do not claim any efficacy for sugar, as a medicine. In our hands it is only a vehicle for the remedial means employed, and not of itself a curative agent. But we can attest the merits of *Camphor*—which, without doubt, did the work in the nine cases recorded as cured—and so can thousands of others who have tried it effectually. If our one-sided brethren would take the pains to peep occasionally into the Homœopathic *Materia Medica*, they might learn faster than by going to the trouble of rediscovering what has long been known.—*Chicago Hom.*

#### ALLOPATHY IN CHOLERA.

The following is an extract from the letter of a medical friend, which, though not written for publication, we give for the benefit of those of our readers who, "if they had the cholera, would not dare to trust Homœopathy." Read it.

"There are some here who believe that cholera is a thing that needs *heroic* treatment, and I can assure you the poor patients get it in its purity. What would you think of the following? First, a large dose of *Calomel*, *Opium*, and *Camphor*; then put under the influence of *Chloroform*, and kept so for some time. Reaction generally comes on about the time they awake out of the *Chloroform* sleep. Vomiting, purging and cramp has by this time stopped, and the patient is reported cured. All seems bright and promising—friends are highly elated at the success of their favorite doctor, and the patient frequently talks sensibly about his situation, expresses hope, etc. The mode of treatment appears ingenious, bold, and, at first glance, quite plausible; but, unfortunately, there is an afterclap to this plan, attended with more certain death than the original disease. The patient, after a while, say from five to thirty hours, begins to be restless; his friends say of him, "he still appears better, but he is so restless I don't know what to make of it." This restlessness increases, more or less rapid, until it requires two or three assistants to keep him on the bed, accompanied with low muttering delirium, and other symptoms of a congested or inflamed state of the brain. The patient soon dies in the most awful struggles ever witnessed by the most experienced physicians.

"This may be said to be the invariable result of the above-mentioned plan of treatment. I have not heard of a single recovery from it, and I know I have made strict inquiry."—*Chicago Hom.*

#### CHOLERA IN CHICAGO.

The Cholera has prevailed here since about the 5th of June last, when it first appeared among the emigrants newly-arrived. Subsequently, several of our prominent citizens were seized with it, and died. The heat of the weather was intense, with a sultry southerly wind. Altogether sickness increased, and a great panic ensued. False reports spread everywhere, representing our dying by hundreds; but the greatest number of deaths in any one day, and from all diseases, was forty-four, and from cholera, twenty-eight. This, for a population of nearly *seventy thousand*, is no very great fatality, especially when it is remembered there are some two hundred doctors in our midst.

It is very materially subsiding now, and confined almost entirely to our floating population; indeed our city is now almost as healthy as usual at this season.—*Ibid.*